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Cc: CN=Kim Jennings/OU=DC/O=USEPA/C=US@EPA[]
From: CN=Craig Matthiessen/OU=DC/O=USEPA/C=US
Sent: Mon 6/18/2012 12:10:22 PM
Subject: FYI - Supervisor of Wyoming Commission Resigns After Saying Greed Motivated Pavillion Group
Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission
96 DEN A-7, 5/18/12

From BNA:

Supervisor of Wyoming Commission Resigns
 After Saying Greed Motivated Pavillion Group

DENVER— The supervisor of the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission resigned June 14 after he commented that greed and desire for compensation were the reasons homeowners in a northwest Wyoming town claimed that hydraulic fracturing contaminated their groundwater.

"I really believe greed is driving a lot of this," the supervisor, Tom Doll, was quoted as saying, according to John Fenton, chairman of Pavillion Area Concerned Citizens, citing various media reports. Doll said the residents near Pavillion, Wyo., are "just looking to be compensated," Fenton told BNA June 15.

Speaking June 5 to a full room at the midyear meeting of the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission (IOGCC) in Vancouver, British Columbia, Doll also criticized an Environmental Protection Agency report linking hydraulic fracturing to groundwater contamination in the Pavillion area.

Doll said EPA's draft report on Pavillion was "incomplete and bad science," and he said the contamination the agency found in a monitoring well came from EPA's drilling of the well, Fenton said.

Doll apologized for the remarks June 6, saying they were "inappropriate and inconsiderate." His comments about EPA's preliminary conclusions were "premature because the scientific investigation to address the concerns of the Pavillion area residents is ongoing," Doll said in a statement obtained by BNA.

Resigned After Meeting With Governor

Doll's comments came while Wyoming Gov. Matt Mead (R) was in China. The two men met after the governor returned to Wyoming, and Doll resigned after that meeting, Renny MacKay, spokesman for the governor, told BNA June 15.

Doll could not be reached for comment.

The EPA Pavillion study has been criticized by various industry groups, most recently in May in a study

conducted for the Independent Petroleum Association of America (96 DEN A-7, 5/18/12).

Doll was appointed Wyoming's top oil and gas regulator in 2009. From 1997 to 2008, he was a district manager at Williams Production Co., overseeing more than 100 employees and another 25 contract employees engaged in coalbed methane exploration and production in Wyoming's Powder River Basin, according to IOGCC.

Fenton said Doll's stepping down was "the appropriate outcome" because it would have been difficult for stakeholders in the state to view Doll as someone who "could remain objective," given his comments.

"It would be nice if we could get a new administrator who didn't come straight out of industry," Fenton added.

John Robitaille, vice president of the Petroleum Association of Wyoming, told BNA that representatives of the oil and gas industry were disappointed by Doll's resignation.

Oversaw Disclosure Rulemaking

Doll was supervisor when the commission enacted its requirements that oil and gas producers disclose the chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing operations, or fracking. Fracking involves high-pressure injection of water, sand, and chemicals deep underground to release oil and natural gas trapped in geologic formations.

"It was a very controversial rule, with very difficult hearings," Robitaille said. "Tom handled that very, very well, and he got us a rule that, to date, has been utilized and hasn't really seen lots of problems. He was a good manager."